

Buy Malaysian Products Campaign beginning to receive positive response

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Buy Malaysian Products Campaign (KBBM) 2019 by the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) is beginning to receive positive response.

Evidence of this is in the success of KPDNHEP's many carnivals and expos this year joined by local companies.

"Many groups are lauding the government campaign and initiative. There is even a request for carnivals to continue till next year," KPDNHEP business development division director, Ismainur Hadi Amat Bakeron (*pix*), told *Bernama*.

He said KPDNHEP has held six zone-specific carnivals and Buy Malaysian campaigns in Sandakan, Kuching, Jitra, Kuala Lumpur and Pulau Pinang since early this year.

He said a climactic carnival was held from Oct 30 to Nov 3 at Angsana, Johor Baru which attracted some 360,000 visitors, including from Singapore.

He said various strategic partnerships have been forged with major retail sector players to drive up sales of and support for homegrown products and services.

KPDNHEP and big supermarket chains like Tesco, The Store, Giant, Aeon, Mydin and others have identified potential local products to boost through advertising material like hanging posters and special shelf stickers.

Ismainur said the e-commerce medium is also being exploited to allow consumers the convenience of buying online.

KPDNHEP is working closely with Lazada and Shopee Malaysia to promote local products as both e-shopping platforms enjoy high online traffic.

"For example, our partnership with Shopee Malaysia during the 10.10 Sale saw more than 100% sales growth for Malaysian products compared to the previous year," said Ismainur.

KPDNHEP also works with SIRIM to help entrepreneurs improve their packaging and as a result has seen product sales jump by 20%.

To date, KPDNHEP has helped some 1,865 small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through its product transformation programme, as well as gain entry into the market and subsequently supermarkets

"Consumers must be more nationalistic and support Malaysian-made products because this has helped stimulate the economy, reduce the outflow of money from the country as well as dependence on imported goods," said Ismainur.

He cited comprehensive feedback gained from a study by researchers from the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) School of Business in 2014 on 12,000 respondents across the country which showed that public awareness of KBBM was high.

"... (an average of 72%) but the awareness wasn't interpreted as a shopping trend. Although high, the percentage for willingness to buy Malaysian-made products was merely around 42%," said Ismainur.

He said KPDNHEP will continue working on changing consumer perception towards these products and the ability of local entrepreneurs to offer products that are comparable to imports.

Ismainur doesn't dismiss the possibility that consumers are unaware of the call to buy local products, but is confident KPDNHEP partnering the media to generate hype for the campaign will raise consumer awareness.

— *Bernama*

